

EAST GREENWICH SCHOOL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 23, 2007 SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

East Greenwich High School Auditorium, 300 Avenger Drive

ANY ITEMS CONSIDERED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MAY BE SUBJECT TO A VOTE

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sue Cienki at 7:10p.m. The following

members were present: William Day, Mrs. Friedemann, Mary Ellen Winters, Susan Records, JeanAnn Guliano, and Anne Palumbo, as well as Superintendent Charles Meyers, Maryanne Crawford, Helen O'Hara and Robert Wilmarth.

2. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

3. Student Council Liaison Report

There was no student council liaison report.

4. Public Comments

Mrs. Abby Ribbins, 20 Hill Drive, spoke about the Committee's consideration of cutting funding for the Cultural Organization of the Arts Program. She read a letter in favor of keeping the program.

Rachel Ladd, Pequot Trail, spoke about COA's impact on her life through the Drama Club at the High School.

Ann O'Grady, Drama Director at Cole Middle School, stated that COA

provided seed money for her first Drama production. She noted that the US Department of Education says that the 5th most common major is the visual and performing arts. She asked to keep the COA budget as it is.

Deb Walsh, Peirce Street, a former COA President, stated that COA gave the Cole Jazz Band money last year to hire a director. She stated that the Committee should cut the fat from the budget, not the muscle.

3. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Meyers stated that he is aware of what COA has done and it was not an easy decision because the programs have been outstanding.

He also noted that the Department of Education has released the school classifications for 05-06. The elementary and middle schools are received high performing and commendable.

Mr. Meyers stated that EdNets, who is performing web services for the district, has held a second training for PTG's and school administrators. He noted that the parent participation takes time and we should see more members once the website is complete.

Mr. Meyers noted that the Facilities Committee will meet at 6:30p.m. in the high school library on January 25 and the Finance Advisory Committee will meet on January 24.

The Superintendent noted that a robbery occurred at the high school last week, and the person was stopped by faculty but got away. He also stated that School Committee has been invited to meet with the Town Council on February 5 at 7:00p.m.

Mr. Meyers stated that Diversity Day will be held in February.

4. New Business

4.1 Appointments

4.1.1 On a motion made by Mrs. Palumbo and seconded by Mr. Day, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Sheila Bono, Educational Assistant for Hanaford School, effective January 2, 2007, for six hours per day.

4.1.2 Kerri Bamford, part-time bookkeeper for central office

Mrs. Guliano made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Palumbo to approve the appointment of Kerri Bamford. Mr. Meyers stated that Mrs. Bamford is a well qualified individual who will replace an existing employee at central office. She is being hired to develop internal controls and to be the contact person for the finance department on the town's end.

Mrs. Friedemann asked if a new position is being created and if it is a union position with benefits. Mrs. Crawford noted that Mrs. Bamford will get a buy back for health insurance, and her salary and benefits until the end of the school year will amount to \$10,000. She also noted that internal controls of accounts payable and payroll have not been strong in the past. Mrs. Friedemann asked if the human resources consultant has made any recommendations with relation to this position. Mrs. Crawford responded that the consultant agreed that another position is needed.

On the vote to hire Mrs. Bamford, Mrs. Cienki, Mrs. Palumbo, Mrs.

Records and Mrs. Guliano voted yes, and Mr. Day, Mrs. Friedemann and Mrs. Winters voted no. The motion passed.

5. Finance Committee Charge

Mr. Meyers stated that this committee is being formed because the tax cap levy needs to be studied. The duties assigned to this committee are as follows:

- 1. Budget and fiscal advice and forecasting for implementation of tax levy cap for years 2008-2010**
- 2. Encourage and serve as a liaison between the community and School Committee regarding School Department finances.**
- 3. Review various funding mechanisms, including state and federal aid and grants and alternative, private or innovative funding opportunities.**
- 4. Recommend criteria for fiscal accountability.**
- 5. Review and advise on impact of state deferral legislation such as mandates, levy cap and proposals and collaborative savings opportunities.**

It was noted that a number 6 should be added, “Work with the school department and Facilities Committee to come up with a long term capital plan.” Mrs. Palumbo made a motion which was seconded by Mrs. Winters to charge the Finance Committee with six duties. The motion passed unanimously.

6. FY 2008 Budget Work Session

Mr. Meyers noted that the maximum amount of the budget increase can only be \$1.4 million because of the tax levy cap.

Mrs. Records asked about the list of consultants employed by the

school department and asked if they are all needed. Mr. Meyers went over the list and gave justifications for the consultants and stated where they are funded.

Mrs. Friedemann stated that the school department should outsource services to save money on benefits and retirement.

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Mrs. Crawford gave a list of potential cuts if the Committee were to add in the COA program and intramural sports. Mr. Meyers stated that the original budget proposal was \$500,000 over the 1.4 million.

Mrs. Cienki asked about the survey on the support staff, noting that she wants to see reductions there. Mrs. Friedemann stated that she has a problem with cutting people who give direct services to students.

Mr. Wilmarth stated that Maintenance cuts were in the amount of \$55,000, which was not a reduction in the overall maintenance budget.

Mrs. Crawford stated that hopefully sports will not have to be cut. She noted that we are not allowed to charge user fees.

Mrs. Friedemann stated that since teachers constitute a majority of the budget, we may have to ask for more from them.

7. School Committee Concerns-There were no concerns stated.

On a motion made by Mrs. Palumbo and seconded by Mr. Day, the Committee, being polled individual, voted unanimously to go into Executive Session at 9:25p.m. on the following items under R.I.G.L.

42-46-5 (a) (1) (2):

1. Administrators' Contract Negotiations

2. Superintendent's Contract

**3. Contract renewal for Oliverio & Marcaccio, School Committee
Attorney**

Respectfully,

Virginia Giuliani

Secretary